

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 73

Introduced by Assembly Member Alejo

June 29, 2011

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 73—Relative to the University of California.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 73, as introduced, Alejo. University of California: graduate admissions.

This measure would request the Regents of the University of California to implement a comprehensive approach, by the end of the 2012–13 academic year, in the respective admissions processes of the university's various graduate programs and professional schools by including a broad variety of academic and personal qualifications. This measure would also request review and revision of the admissions policies of graduate programs and professional schools to include a broader variety of important qualifications, with evaluation of the weight and value given to these qualifications, so that standardized test scores are not the overriding criterion used to determine admissions.

The measure would also request the Regents to prohibit, by the end of the 2012–13 academic year, standardized test scores from being used as the sole criterion for consideration, or the primary criterion for ending consideration, of an applicant for admission to the University of California's various graduate programs and professional schools. The measure would request the Regents to describe the factors considered for admissions decisions by each graduate program or professional school. This measure would then request the Regents to make these descriptions reasonably available to any interested person by publishing

the description of the factors in each graduate program's and professional school's catalogue and by making the information available on their respective Internet Web sites.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The University of California is committed to
2 enrolling a student body that reflects the diversity of the State of
3 California; and

4 WHEREAS, According to the results of the 2010 census of the
5 United States, people of color comprise the majority of the general
6 population of the State of California, making it the most racially
7 and ethnically diverse state in the country; and

8 WHEREAS, Over the last 15 years, there has been a dramatic
9 decrease in the number of underrepresented people of color -
10 including African American, Latino, and Native American students
11 - admitted and enrolled in the graduate programs and professional
12 schools of the University of California; and

13 WHEREAS, From fall 1994 to fall 2009, inclusive, the number
14 of African Americans admitted to law schools at UC Berkeley,
15 UC Davis, and UCLA declined 49 percent, from a total of 239 to
16 121, and their enrollment rate over the same period declined 61
17 percent, from a total of 87 to only 34; and

18 WHEREAS, From fall 1994 to fall 2009, inclusive, the number
19 of Latinos admitted to law schools at UC Berkeley, UC Davis, and
20 UCLA declined six percent, from a total of 273 to 257, and their
21 enrollment rate over the same period declined 26 percent, from a
22 total of 110 to only 81; and

23 WHEREAS, From fall 1994 to fall 2009, inclusive, the number
24 of Native Americans admitted to law schools at UC Berkeley, UC
25 Davis, and UCLA declined 21 percent, from a total of 34 to 27,
26 and their enrollment rate declined 25 percent over the same period,
27 from a total of 12 to only nine; and

28 WHEREAS, From fall 1995 to fall 2009, inclusive, the number
29 of people of color admitted to UC business schools declined 60
30 percent, from a total of 149 to 59, and their enrollment rate declined
31 50 percent over the same period, from a total of 68 to only 34; and

32 WHEREAS, From fall 1995 to fall 2009, inclusive, the number
33 of underrepresented people of color admitted to all of the UC
34 graduate programs declined 26 percent, from a total of 1,385 to

1 1,028, and their acceptance rate declined 47 percent over the same
2 period, from a total of 751 to only 395; and

3 WHEREAS, Over the last 10 years, there has also been a
4 significant decrease in the number of Asian Americans, including
5 Filipino Americans, admitted and enrolled at certain graduate
6 programs and professional schools of the University of California;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, From fall 1995 to fall 2008, inclusive, the number
9 of Filipino Americans admitted to law schools at UC Berkeley,
10 UC Davis, and UCLA declined three percent, from a total of 33
11 to 32, and their enrollment rate declined 12 percent over the same
12 period, from a total of 17 to only 15; and

13 WHEREAS, From fall 1995 to fall 2009, inclusive, the number
14 of Asian Americans admitted to University of California graduate
15 programs declined 11 percent, from a total of 2,333 to 2,078, and
16 their acceptance declined 22 percent over the same period, from
17 a total of 1,097 to only 854; and

18 WHEREAS, These dramatic declines in the numbers of
19 underrepresented people of color admitted to, and enrolling in,
20 University of California graduate programs and professional
21 schools has discouraged underrepresented people of color from
22 applying to graduate programs and professional schools they
23 perceive as hostile and unwelcoming; and

24 WHEREAS, Limiting educational opportunities in higher
25 education at the graduate and professional school level perpetuates
26 inequity among Californians; and

27 WHEREAS, The dramatic decline in the numbers of
28 underrepresented people of color admitted to, and enrolling in,
29 University of California graduate programs and professional
30 schools harms all students because their education is without the
31 benefit of the perspectives those now-absent students once brought
32 to classroom discussions; and

33 WHEREAS, The dramatic decline in the number of
34 underrepresented people of color enrolling in University of
35 California graduate programs and professional schools contributes
36 to a declining number of underrepresented people of color entering
37 into professions, including law, business, education, and
38 engineering; and

39 WHEREAS, The University of California Regents Study Group
40 on Diversity Subcommittee reported in their 2007 “Report of the

1 Work Team on Graduate and Professional School Diversity” that
2 traditional ranking methodologies have been shown to have an
3 adverse effect on new enrollments of underrepresented minorities,
4 and the University of California should leverage its influence with
5 organizations that rank or assess university academic programs to
6 include metrics on diversity and social climate; and

7 WHEREAS, The University of California Study Group on
8 University Diversity reported in their 2007 “Overview Report to
9 the Regents” that change is needed to achieve a level of diversity
10 among students, faculty, and staff appropriate to their mission, as
11 well as a social climate on each of their campuses that is open to
12 and inclusive of persons from all backgrounds; and

13 WHEREAS, The current admissions policies of University of
14 California graduate programs and professional schools are too
15 narrow and do not allow for a large number of qualified students
16 of color to be admitted and enrolled; and

17 WHEREAS, The University of California had approved a
18 proposal for a comprehensive review of its freshman admissions
19 process to consider a broad variety of academic and personal
20 qualifications; however, the same approach is not used in its
21 graduate and professional schools admissions process; and

22 WHEREAS, Standardized test scores, as the sole criterion for
23 consideration or as the primary criterion to end consideration of
24 an applicant, could well constitute a major obstacle to the
25 admission of underrepresented people of color to the University
26 of California’s graduate and professional schools, and the
27 overreliance on standardized test scores, to the exclusion of other
28 valuable admissions information, exacerbates the problem of low
29 admission and enrollment rates of people of color; and

30 WHEREAS, The Law School Admissions Council (LSAC), the
31 organization that administers the Law School Admissions Test
32 (LSAT), launched a five-year effort in January 2001 to urge law
33 schools to deemphasize numbers-based admissions policies and
34 to broaden their admissions criteria; however, despite those efforts,
35 law schools still continue to place a substantial emphasis on
36 standardized test scores; and

37 WHEREAS, The American Bar Association’s Commission on
38 Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession reported that
39 representation by people of color in the legal profession is
40 significantly lower than in most other professions, that entry into

1 the profession by people of color has slowed considerably since
2 1995, and that enrollment by people of color has dropped
3 significantly at top public law schools in California; and

4 WHEREAS, Industry standards and guidelines militate against
5 using standardized test scores as the sole criterion for making
6 important decisions that impact people's lives, and support the use
7 of multiple measures to make high-stakes decisions when these
8 measures are available and will add to the validity of the decision;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, By broadening the admissions criteria of the
11 graduate programs and professional schools, and by prohibiting
12 the use of standardized test scores as the sole criterion for
13 consideration or as the primary criterion to end consideration of
14 the applicant, the Regents of the University of California would
15 assert that the University of California is committed to admitting
16 and enrolling all students, and would assure underrepresented
17 people of color that they are welcome and wanted; now, therefore,
18 be it

19 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
20 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature of the State of California
21 requests the Regents of the University of California to implement
22 a comprehensive approach in the admissions processes to include
23 a broad variety of academic and personal qualifications for their
24 respective graduate programs and professional schools by the end
25 of the 2012–13 academic year; and be it further

26 *Resolved*, That the Legislature requests that the comprehensive
27 approach also include reviewing and revising the admissions
28 policies of graduate programs and professional schools, which
29 claim to include some additional qualifications, to include an even
30 broader variety of important qualifications, as is already done for
31 the undergraduate admissions process of the University of
32 California; and be it further

33 *Resolved*, That the Legislature requests that the comprehensive
34 approach include reviewing and revising the weight or value placed
35 on each of the important factors so that the standardized test scores
36 are not the overriding criterion used to determine admissions; and
37 be it further

38 *Resolved*, That the Legislature officially requests the Regents
39 of the University of California to prohibit, by the end of the
40 2012–13 academic year, standardized test scores from being used

1 as the sole criterion for consideration, or as the primary criterion
2 to end consideration, of the applicant for admission to the
3 University of California's various graduate programs and
4 professional schools; and be it further

5 *Resolved*, That the Legislature requests that the Regents of the
6 University of California describe those factors that are considered
7 by each graduate program's or professional school in making
8 admissions decisions, and make those descriptions reasonably
9 available to any interested person, by publishing the description
10 of the factors in each graduate program and professional school's
11 catalogue, and making the information available on their respective
12 Internet Web sites; and be it further

13 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit a copy
14 of this resolution to each Regent of the University of California
15 and to the author for appropriate distribution.